

REMARKS:

Claims 1-16, 19-27, 29-31, 33, 35 and 43-53 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement and 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner has noted that after the dynamic vulcanization called for in the claims is performed that the rubber elastomer would in fact be at least partially crosslinked and accordingly that the crosslinking would not be "optional." These reasons for rejection have been rendered moot by deleting the word "optionally" where it appeared in claims 1 and 47 with respect to the rubbery polymer being crosslinked. This amendment accordingly puts the claims pending in the subject patent application fully in compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, first and second paragraphs.

Claims 1-16, 19-27, 29-31, 33, 35 and 43-53 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sukaki (United States Patent 6,723,776) in view of the admitted prior art. However, to further distinguish the subject invention from the teachings of the prior art, the independent claims of the subject patent application (claims 1 and 47) have been amended so as to specify that the oil is present at a level which is within the range of 15 parts by weight to 150 parts by weight. This is in contrast to the teachings of Sukaki which call for the softener (oil) to be present at a level of at least 200 parts by weight or more. In fact, Sukaki indicates that it is preferred for the softener to be present at a level of 250 parts by weight or more with it being more preferred for the softener to be present at a level of 300 parts by weight or more (see Sukaki at column 6, lines 14-21).

The teachings of Sukaki do not suggest or imply that compositions containing less than 200 parts by weight of a softener would be useful for any purpose. Accordingly, the compositions called for in the claims of the subject patent application which contain a maximum of 150 parts by weight of an oil are not rendered obvious by the teachings of Sukaki.

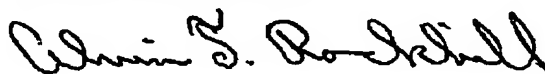
The compositions described by Sukaki all include an ethylene-propylene-diene rubber (EPDM). This is in contrast to the compositions now being claimed wherein an EPDM is not required. However, the compositions now being claimed must include three separate and distinct

polymeric constituents. More specifically, the compositions now being claimed include a soft thermoplastic composition, a rubbery elastomer, and a highly saturated elastomer. This is in contrast to the compositions described by Sukaki that only need to contain a thermoplastic elastomer, such as SEBS, and a rubbery component that contains the EPDM rubber. The teachings of Sukaki do not suggest or imply compositions that do not contain EPDM. However, by utilizing the three polymeric components called for in the claims of the subject patent application it is not necessary to include an EPDM. Such compositions are accordingly not rendered obvious by the teachings of Sukaki.

The applicants do not profess to be the inventors of overmolded articles. However, the utilization of the composition called for in the claims of the subject patent application in overmolding procedures to make articles having an overmolded component is novel and unobvious in light of the teachings of the cited prior art. Nothing within the teachings of Sukaki indicates that the compositions disclosed therein would be useful in overmolding applications. Accordingly, the utilization of a different type of composition in making overmolded articles is not rendered obvious by the teachings of Sukaki. In other words, the teachings of Sukaki certainly don't render obvious the possibility of utilizing the specific composition called for in the claims of the subject patent application in making overmolded articles.

All of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are accordingly fully in compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) and the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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